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Achieving patient-centred care in multidisciplinary teams: Examining interactions when raising a concern about a patient

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Achieving patient-centred care in multidisciplinary teams: Examining interactions when raising a concern about a patient

Objective: NHS England advocates the use of multidisciplinary teams (MDT) in mental health services to achieve patient-centred care, but little is known about how MDT's achieve 'patient-centred care'. Patient-centred care has been argued to occur in MDT meetings when discussion focuses on concerns about a patient. However, many studies propose discussions in meetings are hampered by professional conflict and disagreement. This conflict is suggested in retrospective evaluations of meetings by both staff and researchers, with little known about what actually happens within these meetings. Thus, this study aimed to examine actual MDT meetings to understand how discussants collaborate when discussing concerns around a patient.

Design: Naturalistic data was collected of MDT meetings to examine interactions around patient concerns.

Methods: 9 hours of a learning disabilities MDT meetings were audio recorded and transcribed. Conversation analysis was applied to specific areas of the transcripts in which problems, or 'concerns', around a patient were raised by team members.

Results: Team members often take care to position concerns as topics for the MDT to discuss and attend to potential disagreements in a sensitive manner to prevent disputes hindering topic progression.

Conclusions: Although meetings may seem retrospectively conflictual, this study shows how team members in MDT meetings can both orientate to and 'head off' potential disruptive conflict to keep talk focused on providing care that suits patients' needs. Applying this research to a range of MDTs may help teams reappraise meetings that can feel conflictual, but are in fact valuable spaces to achieve patient-centred care.